

# The Republican.

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TO MR. J. RICHARDS, SCHOOLMASTER,  
HACKNEY.

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Dorchester Gaol, May 17, 1825 of a fable that had neither date nor chronology until four hundred years after its real origin, and five hundred years after its feigned origin, and whose date and chronology were first computed by a monk in the *sixth* of the eighteen centuries now assigned to its existence.

SIR,

You have made yourself a prime subject for my pen. I had appointed other matter to fill this No. of "The Republican;" but the moment I read your letter to Mr. Macklin, I resolved to make way for its most early appearance in print. Your letter has neither date nor place of residence on it; but I guess at Hackney from the information, that Mr. Macklin resides there; as no other communication has reached me with it. I have put into Italics those parts on which I intend to comment, and here copy it, to your shame.

TO MR. MACKLIN.

SIR,

SITUATED as I am, as a preceptor of youth, I consider myself responsible to *Jehovah the most high God the possessor of the heaven and the earth*, for every principle and sentiment that I countenance to be propagated in my school; and as a firm believer in the truths of *Revealed religion and of the authenticity of the sacred scriptures, as being the word of the God of truth who cannot lie; (and that, not only a part thereof but the whole, for St. Paul affirms, all scripture is written by inspiration of God)* I must set my face as a flint against any Infidel or Deistical sentiment being broached in my school by any one. Your son has, I understand, said to some of my scholars *he does not believe there is a hell, &c.*

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*and God must be a very wicked God to make such a place, nor does he believe in the truth of the Bible. When I interrogated him about it he told me you and his mother taught him so; I must therefore beg you will excuse my having him any longer at my school as I consider his example would be very injurious to the sentiments and morals of my pupils.*

*That you may not think I act without being able to give you a reason for what I write I would recommend to your serious perusal and consideration the following passages of holy writ:*

*If any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, Rev. chap. xxii. ver. 19.*

*The wicked shall be turned into hell, Psalm ver. ix. chap. 17.*

*Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest, Psalm chap xi. ver. 6.*

*Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. chap. xxv. ver. 41.*

*Hell from beneath is moved to meet thee, Isaiah chap. xiv. ver. 9.*

*How can ye escape the damnation of hell, Matt. chap. xxiii. ver. 15.*

*And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, Rev. chap. xiv. ver. 10.*

*These were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, Rev. chap. xix. ver. 20.*

*But the fearful, and unbelieving, &c. shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. chap. xxi. ver. 8.*

*Wherefore, I say unto you fear him who is able to cast both soul and body into hell, Matt. chap. x. ver. 28.*

*For hell is naked before him and destruction hath no covering, Job. chap. xxvi. ver. 6.*

*These, Sir, may suffice, out of very many, to prove there is such a place of punishment.. And as for believing only a part of the Bible is to call into question the veracity of the supreme being; for he that believeth not the record of God hath made him a liar, 1 John, chap. v. ver. 10, and shall not see life: and merely to disbelieve them; because some things are mysterious, is, to refuse the greatest of evidence. In my humble opinion, the mysterious doctrines of the Christian Revelation are as full and undeniable evidences of its heavenly authority, as any thing can be; because it is not possible for men to devise any absurd principles, but the absurdity of those principles may be discovered by reason: and as there are doctrines in the word of God which are either absurd or mysterious, and reason cannot prove them absurd, it clearly follows that they are proper mysteries, on such truths as the wisdom of man could never invent; so far are the mysteries of the Christian Revelation from being an objection against it, that they are invincible arguments in its favour; fuller proof cannot be given*



of it, and if the opposers of Gospel mysteries cannot prove them absurdities they ought to allow that they are incomprehensible truths, not discoverable by reason, and consequently that the men who first discovered them must have been divinely inspired; this reasoning seems to me to be clear, easy and infallible, and its force really unanswerable.

That you may not live and die an unbeliever in the whole truth of the Bible, is the sincere desire of

Sir, your well wisher,

J. RICHARDS.

P.S. I have enclosed my little account which I shall be obliged to you to settle.

Now, Sir, it is my task to shew you that you have not given Mr. Macklin any thing in the shape of a reason for your insolent conduct towards him and his son; and that however competent you might be to teach the art of writing and arithmetic, you are not competent to be a preceptor of youth: for the precepts of your letter are false, wicked, and injurious to youth. Mr. Macklin taught his son that which was strictly true and moral, that there was no place of punishment called a hell; and if there were such a place, a God must have been a very wicked God to have made it and to have made mankind fit inhabitants of a such place. This was calculated to make a moral impression on the mind of his son, to give him an idea of justice, and to make him abhor cruelty and wantonness.

He also taught him, that which was strictly true, in teaching him that there was no *hell*, as a fabled place of threatened torment is designated. I teach you that there is no such a hell, and that there is no such a God, as a God competent to make such a place as you call *hell*. You refer Mr. Macklin to the Bible, and he and I question the value of the assertions of the Bible. You will readily confess, that you know nothing more of *hell*, than what the Bible tells you, and I tell you, that the Bible is a book of lies, a wicked horrible book, calculated to corrupt the mind of youth and to make mankind wicked and miserable. For a proof of my assertion, I shall refer you to every thing of which you have a positive knowledge, and not to mystery.

You begin your letter with saying, that, as a preceptor of youth, you consider yourself responsible to Jehovah, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth. One part of your sacred scripture; one word of your God that cannot lie (men can lie for him) says, that *heaven and earth shall pass away*. Can you tell me what your most high

God will then possess? If he be the *most high God*, how many lower Gods do you count? If he be the most high God, what *rate* do you give to Jesus Christ, and his father, by proxy, the Holy Ghost? May we apply the three degrees of comparison to your trinity in unity, and and say, the one is high, the second more high, and the third most high? The high God in your Saint Paul's first heaven, the more high God in his second heaven, and the most high God in his third heaven, to which he was caught up, and in which he heard unutterable things? To hear unutterable things is a contradiction, or one of your mysteries; for, to have been heard they must have been uttered. May we say, that the Holy Ghost is positive (though always flying,) that Jesus Christ is comparative, and that Jehovah is superlative? Or will you conclude with me, that all said about these Gods is positive, comparative and superlative folly and ignorance of realities? Can you picture Jehovah to your mind? Can you liken the trinity in unity? Can you trace heaven among the rolling globes of matter which you can track wherever the eye or idea can extend? Can you shew a reason, why a power, that could have made all to its pleasure, should have made a hell before mankind, and man as a sensitive being to fill it? Or was hell made after Eve ate the apple? Where is it situated? In the earth, or in what other globe of matter? Why is the combustible matter, brimstone alone, since that suffocates animals before it can burn them? And what is the crucible or shell of hell made of, since so powerful a heat would dissolve all matter of which we have now a knowledge? Are you a believer firm enough to answer these questions, and to prove, that what is said in your Bible about a hell is not a lie?

You say, that you are a firm believer in truths of revealed religion: and I say, that you are not. A man deceives himself, when he talks about believing that of which he has no knowledge either by demonstration or by analogy. Belief is a consequence of knowledge and can only exist as a consequence of knowledge. An inhabitant of the torrid zone cannot believe that water can be congealed, until he sees it, or can be assured by a respectable person, in whom he can see no motive to deception, that it is the case. But here we have neither demonstration, analogy, nor credible witnesses; for I prove incontestibly, that the writers of the books of the Bible were never the eye witnesses of the circumstances which they describe. I must refer you to "The Republican" for an extensive reading upon this sub-



ject; but I can say here, in particular, that the books of the Old Testament have no authentic date beyond the Babylonian Colonization; that no people called Jews inhabited Judea before that time; and that no such a person, as Jesus Christ is fabled to have been, ever lived in Judea, or in any other part of the earth. These are facts fully corroborated in "The Republican," a series of volumes already far more important than the Bible, and pregnant with revealed truths, such as are not to be found in any books of prior date.

A superior being to man had never revealed himself thus: "*I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods but me.*" The very expression betrays fear of other Gods; and the second in the Jewish Decalogue is a further proof, that the Priest who wrote it did fear the following of other Gods than the one which he had set up. Had God, or such a God, appeared and spoken once to man, there is every reason, in sense and justice, to think, that he would appear as often as any doubt existed about him: And as it is said, that all his cares are for mankind, that he has made every thing for them, and that he lives, or is a being, solely for them; he has, of course, no more important business than to make himself well known to the successive generations of mankind. Instead of that, we see nothing of him, and you will not allow, that any man has seen him since Moses, a fictitious personage, who lived no one can tell where or when. Sir, your God was made by man, by a wicked man; your religion was revealed by man, by a wicked man. There are no truths in revealed religion; it is built wholly on fable and falsehood; and for the truth of this my assertion, I appeal to what we call the universe, or to any portion of it; I appeal to every man, or to you, or to any man, who can contradict me by an appeal to any thing more than the written fable itself.

*The God of truth cannot lie.* No; but what do you define by the words *God of truth*? It means nothing, it is what we call a nonentity; therefore, it cannot lie; because there is nothing to act or to be acted upon, of which you speak.

Saint Paul's affirmation is not so good as my affirmation; I appeal to history, to facts, to things as they now exist, and as they formerly existed; whilst Saint Paul bids you to take his word, without a reference to any thing for proof: he was interested in affirming a lie, in supporting a fable.

Again, what is meant by, *all scripture is written by God*?

My pen is making *scripture* for you, is that by the inspiration of God? Truly so, upon the principles of the origin of the Christian religion. The Logos, or principle of reason was personified; and every thing that appeared reasonable either in writing or speaking, was said to come from that God, that personified logos or principle of reason. I am as much inspired by God, as was Saint Paul, or any other writer or prophet, Jew or Christian. I am inspired to write truth, the whole truth that I know, and nothing but the truth. My whole series of writing will testify to this: and this is more than you or any other person can say, and saying prove, for any one of the various writers of those books which compose the Bible.

If such a place as Hell doth exist, we are to suppose, christianity, that it was made at what you call the creation; perhaps designed before man; then, is not the inference just, that such a God must be a wicked God, to create such places of torment, and sensitive beings for the purpose of torturing them. It has been well said, that all religious people worship the Devil, or a Devil under various names; for none but the Deist or such a man as Thomas Paine has ever fabricated a decent and benevolent God. All others worship some terrible phantom which they fear: they are conscious of baseness and create a God fit to punish themselves, just as they feel that they merit. Mr. Macklin was the good father, the proper preceptor of youth, to give such a precept to his son; and you have proved yourself incompetent or unworthy to be a preceptor of youth. You, in your present state of mind must be a corrupter of youth. Teach them writing and arithmetic; but, I pray you to be good enough not to corrupt their minds with atrocious fables, with a revealed religion that is false in every shape and under every consideration, if you are incapable of unfolding the science of matter and motion to them. Make yourself responsible to the present amount of knowledge, to the existing common sense of mankind, for your conduct towards your scholars, and not to a phantom which exists only in the imagination of disordered brains. Your Jehovah is an idol of the mind that has never yet been even carved or painted: as much an idol as ever was Jupiter or Thor or any other godly name adopted by our ancestors. Set your face as a flint against falsehood, against a revealed religion that corrupts and beggars the mass who partake of it, and not against infidel or deistical sentiments, that may, by possibility, be true. Examine them, prove them false and wicked if you



can; but do not set your face against them, as that is an act of bigotry and ignorance, totally unworthy of a public teacher.

I am not disposed to treat you satirically; I am not disposed to underrate your pretensions; I look upon schoolmasters as a very important class of men, and every way superior to the priesthood; but I see you ignorant, I see you bigoted and dogmatical, turning a more than usually sensible boy from your school; because of the acuteness of his mental powers; or because of the benefit exhibited by the superior instruction received from his parents. I feel this to be an all important circumstance, that your conduct in it deserves reprobation, and your judgment correction. I feel also, that the parents of this boy deserve commendation and encouragement, and I will maintain the propriety of their conduct, and of the son's conduct, before all the ignorance or all the knowledge of mankind. I have a boy, not yet six years old, with me, born since I have been in this Gaol. I teach this boy, as I do all my children, that all they hear about God is nonsense; that there is no God; that the Bible is a book full of fables, and not worthy of their attachment or respect; that prayers or praying is not necessary; but that it is a proof of ignorance. My boy of five years old would confound you by his questions, if he could put on the same face towards you as towards me. He confounds me: that is, he carries on a chain of questions until he comes to a point where I am compelled to plead ignorance, and then crows because I cannot answer him. I encourage this; because, I am sure, that this is the proper way to educate children. I make him sensible of his own acuteness by every possible caress and encouragement: whilst your mode of instruction, your precepts about God and Religion, are only calculated to degrade and stupify a boy, to reduce him to comparative idiocy: at least, to exclude more important knowledge. You use a variety of words to him, you tell him of romantic tales, of circumstances which he cannot comprehend, and of which you have no knowledge, but in the form of words which compose the fable, and which you gather from that book of your degradation—the Bible.

My eldest boy first went to school about five years ago, and to a very respectable school in London, the boys, his schoolfellows, used to joke him about believing in the Bible; and he, without understanding the matter, would say, out of bravado, that he did not. We heard no complaint on the part of the master. He was but five years old: and last summer, on being asked, if he would go into the shop and

stand prosecution for selling the Age of Reason, and be sent to Gaol as his father was, he seemed to be eager for it, as a great honour. So you may see, that it is as easy to teach children, that the Bible is not, as that it is a good book. If the priest, or such a priestly schoolmaster as yourself, does not interfere, you will find no God nor Devil to be troubled about the matter. If prosecutions be renewed, to teach children, this oldest boy of mine shall take his turn at twelve years of age and defend himself in Court.

I now come to your Bible reasons for your conduct. Your first quotation is Revelation chap. xxii. verse 19. *If any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.* This, you suppose to have been written for the purpose of coming in at the end of those books which form the Bible, and to be applicable to the whole Bible; when, in fact, it was only meant by the writer to apply to the single book of Revelations, a book that is an outrage upon all existing knowledge, and which has been defended by very few Christians. Among the most early christians, it was proclaimed the work of Cerinthus, an enemy, for the purpose of bringing christianity into disgrace. But some liked it because it was so delightfully mysterious, and it was finally smuggled among the canonical books. It was not one of those which jumped upon the table from among his uncanonical fellows, at the Council of Nice, and at the prayers of the Bishops. When that book was written, the writer was not inspired with knowledge enough to know, that his precious mystery would become the fag end of a book to be called the Bible, as a collection of Jewish and Christian books; but knowing, that interpolations, omissions, and alterations were common among scribes, he put in a protest and a menace against any alteration in this book.

This was the common practice of Ireneus, the Bishop of Lyons. I have just received a pamphlet from America, which I will append to this letter, and which makes Ireneus to be the author of the book of the Revelations. It is the work of a General of the army and a member of the United States Congress. He calls it an Explanation to the Apocalypse: and, certainly, he has found an ingenious solution to the riddle, if not the correct one. The circumstance of the adjuration, at the end, is the only coincidence that I perceive, though Ireneus was a most romantic writer, and he is the oldest known historian of Christianity that we have. He is



as likely to have written the Apocalypse as any romancer that I know.

Your other quotations are chiefly about Hell, and you conclude by saying—“*these, Sir, may suffice out of very many, to prove there is such a place of punishment.*” Just as much as an avowed romance is a proof of the truth of its own tales. Were there a God, a heaven, and a hell, we should certainly know something more about them than the Bible teaches. The men, who wrote these religious romances, were ignorant of every thing which we know about the planetary system of matter. Earth was to them the bottom of the world, and all the rest above it. Hell they fancied to exist somewhere in the bowels of the earth. They knew nothing about the motions of matter: they were in fact, the most ignorant of writers, inspired or uninspired, and it is a disgrace to us now, amidst the present burstings forth of purer knowledge, to cherish their ignorant books.

This doctrine about hell, about Tophet, Gehenna or Tartarus, originated with the practice of burning mankind, either on a funeral pile, or as a sacrifice to the Gods. It has no other foundation. The priests of all ages and all countries have been studious to eke out some new religious doctrine that should bring them new profits by further terrifying and degrading their ignorant and powerless, powerless because ignorant, dupes.

Your concluding argument, that the unintelligibility of the Christian Doctrines is the best evidence of their good foundation, is upon a par with the Christian system of arithmetic: the three in one, and one and three. But you also plead the superiority of divine absurdity over human absurdity, and say, that the former cannot like the latter be unravelled by human reason. Mine, you may call divine or devilish reason which you please; but I can unravel all your divine absurdities, by shewing you, that there is no such a God in existence as any man has preached. I shew the absurdity of all religion, by shewing, that it has arisen out of human ignorance: that the material system of each planet and the planets in relation to each other, their immense size and still more immense distances, exclude the possibility of their ever having been the work of any thing like reason or design, whether human, or divine, or devilish. I prove every Christian doctrine absurd, by proving, that no such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that, Christianity is a fable antedated by a century.

Supposing that I were to write a lie, supposing that I

were to say, your first and superlative God Jehovah, or your second and comparative God Jesus Christ, or your third and positive God the Holy Ghost, or your fourth and lowest God the Devil, or these four of your Gods altogether, came and shook hands with me last night and inspired me to write this to you; how are you to contradict me? how are you to prove my lie absurd, but in proving that neither of these supposed Gods has existence? I could write a more plausible lie, a better fable and mystery, than any one contained in your Christian doctrines; and I could lay claim to every voucher for its authenticity, that you now claim for that of Christianity, or for your Bible generally. But I shall not do this. I know the present good sense of mankind is sufficient to scout it; though it is not yet quite powerful enough to root out that inveterate lie which has the sanction of centuries, and, for impugning which, you eject a moral boy from your school, and insult an excellent father and mother; because they are more wise, if not more honest than yourself. Go, bigotted blockhead, go, beg pardon from Mr. and Mrs. Macklin, and solicit the honour of having their well instructed son returned to your school. Learn from this child, that there is not a hell, and that if there were a hell, such as you Christians paint, and such a God, he must be a wicked God, he must be the very image, the very brother, of that God which you call a Devil.

It is high time, that we had some avowedly atheistical schools for children. They would produce a new and noble race of men and women, far superior to any that are now turned out of the Christian schools. If children were instructed in natural history during the time which they now waste in reading from and poring over religious books, their minds would enlarge, and their bodies be made more healthy, by mere inquisitiveness. To terrify a child about a hell, or a terrible God, can neither enlarge its mind, nor conduce to the health of its body; but must act reversely upon its tender and nervous frame. More knowledge, if proper steps were taken, might be communicated to a child of ten years of age, than is now held by our grey-headed men of Oxford and Cambridge. Incessant boring with the subject of religion, with that which is most certainly founded in error, not only excludes the sound knowledge that might be communicated in the same time; but the frame or mind of the child is rendered unapt, disqualified, for a rapid reception of truths, of useful knowledge. This accounts for the bigotry of all old religious people, for the difficulty of



divesting them of a single notion which they have imbibed in youth. They hate knowledge, they hate the trouble of investigation; because the inquisitive powers of the mind has been destroyed by brutal and wicked dogmas in their youth. *Ye religious schoolmasters, ye religious parents, ye are the greatest enemies that your pupils and children find through life. You are their very murderers; you are worse; for you destroy the source of their happiness, and leave them with sensations to feel misery and pain, and with an instruction that such and such only is to be the lot of this life. Yours is the predominant wickedness; yours is the corruption of morals; yours is the hell in this life which you promise to wiser people in another that cannot come.*

RICHARD CARLILE.

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AN EXPLANATION OF THE APOCALYPSE, OR REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

*By Alexander Smyth.*

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THE important question respecting the book of the Revelation of St. John the divine, is, whether is it a prophetic vision of future events, or an artificial enigmatical relation of past events, under the form of prophecy.

Let us first examine, by what early writers of the church this book has been quoted or referred to. The learned Lardner says, "It is *very probable* that Hermas had read the book of St. John's Revelation, and imitated it; he has many things resembling it." This conclusion is drawn from the resemblance alone; from which I draw one entirely different. Hermas wrote after all the apostles were dead, and probably about the year 100. Instead of the splendid city, the new Jerusalem, he has a great square tower, built with bright square stones, which are the saints. The work of Hermas is persuasive evidence that the Apocalypse was not written before his time; for although there is, in some particulars, a resemblance, yet the machinery of Hermas is so far inferior to that of the Apocalypse, that we must believe that the work of Hermas was first written; as in architecture the hut preceded the palace. A man of fertile imagination, with the visions of Hermas before him, might produce the Apocalypse; but it is not probable, that a writer with the Apocalypse before him, and imitating it, should produce such a work as the pastor of Hermas.

Doctor Lardner says, "I think it also *highly probable* that Papias had read the book of revelation." There is no evidence making this probable. Papias was bishop of Hierapolis in Asia from 110 to 116 A. C., and introduced the opinion of the Millenarians<sup>1</sup>, he wrote a work entitled "An explication of the oracles of the Lord;" but he has left nothing to show that he ever saw the Apocalypse.

<sup>1</sup> Lardner.

Justin Martyr, who composed an apology for the Christians, and suffered death about the year 167, says, "And a man among us by name John, one of the apostles of Christ, in the revelation made to him, has prophesied *the believers* in our Christ shall live a thousand years in Jerusalem; and after that shall be the general, and in a word, the eternal resurrection, and judgment of all men together." This indeed resembles that passage in the Apocalypse which says that, *the martyrs* lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, and that the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. Justin may have seen some of the Apocalypses from which that which we now have was in part compiled; but I cannot agree that he ever saw the Apocalypse, in the form in which it now appears.

Polycarp, who suffered death about the year 166, in his works, quotes and refers to Matthew, Luke, the Acts, and ten of the Epistles; but he never mentions the Revelation. He wrote on the resurrection, and the last judgment; and he uses this expression, "Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world, as Paul teaches?" If Polycarp had known such a book as the Revelation of St. John the divine, and considered it as the work of John the apostle, he would most assuredly, have quoted it when writing on such subjects; and had the work existed in his time, it must have been known to him; as he was for many years bishop of Smyrna, one of the seven churches.

Marcion, 144, received ten of the epistles of Paul; but he never mentioned the Apocalypse. Tatian, 172, received the gospels, and several of Paul's epistles; but he never mentioned the Apocalypse. Theodotus of Byzantium, 187, mentioned the books of John, Matthew, Luke, the Acts, and the epistles to Timothy, the Romans, the Galatians, and the Corinthians; but he said nothing of the Apocalypse.

Athenægoras of Alexandria, who, about 177 or 180, wrote an apology for the Christians, speaks of a general opinion among them, that at the time of the resurrection, "the earth shall deliver up her dead;" but in writing a discourse of the resurrection of the dead, he never quotes or refers to the Apocalypse; a strong presumptive proof that no such work was known to him.

The Apocalypse is not mentioned in the writings of Theophilus bishop of Antioch, 181. Eusebius indeed has said that, Theophilus in a book against Hermogenes, brought proof from the Apocalypse; but Eusebius is a writer of doubtful credit; and this unsupported hearsay testimony of his, is unsatisfactory. Theophilus says that the evil demon does not cease to accuse; "this demon is also called the dragon." This may have furnished a hint to the writer of the Apocalypse.

Ireneus, bishop of Lyons in Gaul, who is supposed to have died in 202, speaks of the Apocalypse, and says, "It was seen no long time ago, but almost in our age, at the end of the reign of Domitian." In the fragments left by him, which are only found extant in a barbarous latin version, is this passage<sup>3</sup>; "As also John in the Revelation says, The incense is the prayers of the saints<sup>4</sup>."

It is said that Praxeas, from 194 to 207, argued from the Revelation, first chapter and eighth verse, "I am Alpha and Omega, &c."

Caius, a presbyter of Rome, from 210 to 217, as we are told by Eusebius, writes thus; "And Cerinthus also, (who by his revelations, as if written by some great apostle, imposes upon us monstrous relations of

<sup>2</sup> 1 Col. 6. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Lardner doubts whether this passage be genuine.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. 8. 3.



things of his own invention, as shown to him by an angel) says that, after the resurrection, there shall be a terrestrial kingdom of Christ, and that men shall live again in Jerusalem, subject to sensual desires and pleasures; and he says there will be a thousand years spent in nuptial entertainments." This shows that Caius had read the book of the Revelation, and considered it a forgery by Cerinthus.

Clement of Alexandria, 192 to 217, refers to the passage which constitutes the twenty-first verse of the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation, as the words of an apostle; and he writes thus; "Such a one, though here upon earth he be not honoured with the first seat, shall sit upon the four and twenty thrones, judging the people, as John says in the Revelation." Although this is no correct quotation, it shews that the Apocalypse was known to Clement.

Tertulian, 195 to 220, says, "John in his Apocalypse is commanded to correct those who eat things sacrificed to Idols, and commit fornication<sup>5</sup>." Again he says, "The apostle John in the Apocalypse, describes a sharp two edged sword, coming out of the mouth of God<sup>6</sup>."

Dionysius of Alexandria, 230 to 265, has criticised the Apocalypse. He contends that the manner, style, structure, sentiments, diction, and construction, plainly distinguish this work from the writings of the apostle John.

It appears, therefore, that the Apocalypse was not in being in the time of Polycarp, 166; and that it was in being before the death of Ireneus in 202. This work condemns the sect of Nicolaitans; and Nicolaus, the founder of that sect, was of the second century.

The writer of the Apocalypse has addressed the churches Pergamos, Thyatira<sup>7</sup>, Sardis, Philadelphia, Smyrna, Ephesus, and Laodicea; all those cities were situated in Asia minor, in a space not more extensive than eighty miles from north to south by one hundred and eighty miles from east to west<sup>8</sup>; he does not address any church in Europe, Africa, Palestine, or Syria. The writer had probably dwelt in Asia minor, and perhaps in one of those cities in which were the seven churches addressed.

If, with some of the fathers, we suppose this book not to be genuine<sup>9</sup>, we may look for the author about the time when the work first appeared; and for the events pretended to have been foretold, in the history of the preceding age.

The contents of the historical part of the Apocalypse, may be stated thus:—

- Chapter 6. *The reign of Commodus, and his death.*
- Chapter 8. *Heresies in the time of Commodus.*
- Chapter 9. *The same subject continued.*
- Chapter 11. *The fall of Pertinax and Didius.*
- Chapter 12. *Septimius Severus, his wife and eldest son.*
- Chapter 13. *Albinus, his statues, medals, and coins.*
- Chapter 14. *Caracalla, the army of Severus, and the punishment of the pretorian guards.*
- Chapter 16. *Civil war between Severus and Niger.*

<sup>5</sup> Rev. 2. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. 1. 16.

<sup>7</sup> It is admitted by Epiphanius and Grotius, that there was no Christian church at Tyatira in the time of St. John.

<sup>8</sup> These cities were all situated in a tract of country a little larger than New-Jersey.

<sup>9</sup> It was rejected by the council of Laodicea in 363.

Chapter 17. *The city of Byzantium, and the emperor Niger.*

Chapter 18. *Byzantium taken and destroyed.*

Chapter 19. *Caracalla, and the defeat of Albinus at Lyons.*

I will now proceed to give a more particular explanation of this book.

Chapter 2. The writer speaks of the synagogue of satan at Smyrna, and of satan's throne at Pergamos. At those two cities were the principal temples of Æsculapius, which God was supposed to appear in the form of a serpent.

"Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things offered to idols." Perhaps this is Maximilla<sup>10</sup>, one of the prophetesses of Montanus, who in 171, commenced the propagation of his heresy in Phrygia, adjacent to Thyatira<sup>11</sup>. Maximilla is said to have lived until the year 218.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." I presume that Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who suffered death about the year 166, is the angel to whom this is addressed.

Chapter 3. Melito, bishop of Sardis, is the angel of that church. He is said to have been a eunuch; and there seems to be an allusion to his emasculation. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same will I clothe in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life<sup>12</sup>."

Chapter 6. "And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow." This is Commodus<sup>13</sup>, who took great delight in shooting with a bow, and gave astonishing proofs of his dexterity and skill; he would shoot off the head of an ostrich when running at its utmost speed; and he would kill a panther that had seized a man, before it had time to hurt him. He erected statues to himself through all the city of Rome; and one of them, which stood opposite to the senate house, held a bent bow.

"And he went forth conquering and to conquer." Commodus fought as a gladiator seven hundred and thirty-five times, and used to subscribe himself, "The conquerer of a thousand gladiators."

"Another horse red; and it was given to him who sat thereon to take peace from the land, and that men might kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword." This is Maternus, a deserter, who in 187, collected the bands of deserters and robbers into a little army, set open the prisons, invited the slaves to assert in their freedom, plundered many cities of Spain and Gaul, and was near effecting a design formed by him to murder Commodus, and usurp the throne.

"A black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. A quart of wheat for a bit<sup>14</sup>." This is Cleander, a freed man of Com-

<sup>10</sup> Pope Victor gave to Prisca and Maximilla, a letter of peace to the churches of Asia, which he afterwards revoked.

<sup>11</sup> Or it may be Philumene, the inspired virgin, who was the companion of Apelles, 188, whose place of residence I have not found mentioned in church history.

<sup>12</sup> Compare with Isaiah, 55. 4, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Commodus, whose character is known to the reader of history, is the first emperor that a christian writer of the second century would mount on a white horse. his favourite concubine Marcia, (who was little less than empress,) was a Christian; and, by her influence protected the Christians.

<sup>14</sup> The *chænix* contained near three half pints; the *denarius* was equal



modus, who governed him, and amassed immense wealth. By a monopoly of corn, he produced a famine in 188, which occasioned an insurrection of the people, which was appeased with his head.

"A pale horse, and his name that sat on him was death, and the grave followed with him: and power was given him to slay, on the fourth part of the earth, with sword, and with famine, and with pestilence, and with the wild beasts of the earth." A plague broke out at Rome in 187, and continued until 191. It was so fatal in 189 that two thousand citizens of Rome died daily. What is said of wild beasts, may allude to a game law of Commodus, which provided that no one should kill a lion, even in his own defence. In consequence thereof, the African lions infested the villages and cultivated lands, preying on mankind with impunity.

"And I beheld when he opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood." An earthquake is a revolution, civil war, or other great commotion. The sun black like sackcloth, is Commodus murdered; and the moon like blood, is Marcia, who caused him to be murdered.

"The stars of Heaven fell unto the earth even as a fig-tree casteth its untimely figs, when it is shaken by a mighty wind." Pertinax, who succeeded to the empire, sold the slaves of Commodus, among whom were three hundred beautiful women, and as many boys.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together." Pertinax sold all the apparatus of luxury of his predecessor: the statutes, pictures, rich furniture of the palace, gold and silver plate, horses and carriages. The vile ministers of the pleasures of Commodus were sought out, condemned, and their estates forfeited; some of which exceeded the estates of the richest senators.

CHAP. 8. "A great mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea." I suppose that the seven trumpets relate to the church. The great mountain is, I presume, Montanus, who propagated his heresy in 171, for the suppression of which, the council of Hierapolis was held in 173, without effect.

"There fell a great star from Heaven, burning as it were a lamp,\*\* and the name of the star is called Wormwood." This blazing star may be Tatian<sup>15</sup>, a disciple of Justin Martyr, and one of the most learned men of his age. He is called *Αφιρθος*, which may signify without pleasure, or without drinking, from his doctrines, which were of the most austere kind.

The fourth trump, on the sounding of which, the third part of the sun, moon, stars, day and night, were darkened, may signify the excommunication by pope Victor of the churches of Asia, on occasion of the controversy respecting the proper time of keeping easter.

CHAP. 9. "I saw a star *fallen*<sup>16</sup> from Heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the pit of hell," *Φρεατος της αβυσσου*. This star who had fallen from Heaven, is Tatian. He first propagated his doctrines in 172, and is said to have been the founder of the sect of Encratites. The locusts are the Encratites, who rejected wine even in the ceremony

to seven pence and three farthings sterling; it was the price of a day's labour; so that a bushel of wheat must have cost the price of more than forty days labour.

<sup>15</sup> Possibly this star may be Theodotus the tanner of Byzantium, who was excommunicated by Pope Victor. Theodotus is said by Eusebius, to have been the first who maintained the Arian opinions.

<sup>16</sup> I here follow the translation of Thompson.

of the eucharist, abstained from marriage, professed continence, rejected all the comforts and conveniencies of life, and macerated their bodies by fasting. That sect took its name from *Εγκρατες*, continent, or temperate, which sounds something like *Ακριδες*, locusts.

The sixth trumpet may relate to the Ophites, or Serpentinians, a sect sprung from the Gnostics, whose leader was one Euphrates, who flourished in the latter end of the second century <sup>17</sup>.

CHAP. 11. The two martyrs are Lætus the prætorian prefect, and Marcia the Christian concubine of Commodus, who were the chief authors of his death, and were murdered by order of the emperor Didius, a few days before he himself suffered the same fate. The Lord <sup>18</sup> of the earth before whom those martyrs stand, is Commodus.

"If any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Commodus had determined to put Lætus and Marcia to death; but they anticipated him; and Didius, who put them to death, was soon afterwards slain.

"And a tenth of the city fell." I am doubtful whether this can signify the death of Pertinax, who being governor of the city of Rome, was made emperor on the death of Commodus, and, after an excellent reign of eighty-seven days, was murdered by the prætorian guards. In his name we find the Roman numerals I, and X; one, ten; it is to be recollected that we are examining an enigma.

"And in the earthquake were slain *names of men* seven thousand." Here we have another revolution. The writer seems to have regarded the death of Didius as only an incident of the revolution occasioned by the death of Pertinax. In the name of Didius, we find the Roman numerals VII, and DD; that is, seven, a thousand. The time is come "to destroy (or despoil) those who destroy (or corrupt) the earth." This threatens the prætorian guards.

CHAP. 12. "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This is Julia Domna, daughter of the priest of the sun at Emessa in Syria, whom Septimius Severus married, because the astrologers affirmed that the stars had promised her a crown.

"A great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." This is Septimius Severus.

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." This is Caracalla.

"And her child was caught up to God and his throne." History informs us, that Evodus, a freed man of Severus <sup>19</sup>, having been charged with the education of Caracalla, gave him a Christian woman for his nurse.

<sup>17</sup> The four angels bound in Euphrates, may be Appelles, Potitus, Basilicus, and Cyneros, leaders in 190, of the Marcionites.

<sup>18</sup> Mill refers to thirteen ancient copies, wherein we read *Κυριον* Lord, and not *Θεον* God, as in our copy; to wit, Alexandrian, Stephens α, ιε, Baroc. Petav. 2. Covel. 2. Sinah, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Victorine, Hippolytus, and Arethas. This edition published by Roberts, in 1729, with a liberal translation, reads *Κυριον*. The passage in Zechariah, from which this expression is borrowed, reads, in the Suptuagint, *Κυριον*.

<sup>19</sup> Severus was at first favourable to the Christians; and is said to have allowed an apartment in the palace to Proculus Torpacio, a Christian physician, who had cured him of a disease by anointing him with oil. Seve-



"He persecuted the woman that brought forth the male child." Severus was jealous of his wife Julia; in consequence of which, she, either from a consciousness of guilt, or from a desire of safety, withdrew from public affairs, and occupied her time with literary pursuits. She is therefore said to be nourished "from the face of the serpent"<sup>20</sup>.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." Severus made war against Syria in 194, for supporting Niger; he also made a war, of little importance, against the Jews in 198, on account of their attachment to Niger; and in 201, he forbade, under severe penalties, any one to join the Jews or Christians.

CHAP. 13. "I saw a wild beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns, ten crowns." This is Albinus, one of those who contended with Severus for the Roman empire. He is described as being like a leopard; this indicates a variegated character; and such was that of Albinus, of whom it is said that, notwithstanding his many vices, he was a man of great courage and skill in military affairs, and commonly called a second Cataline. The feet of a bear, indicate a rude and brutal character; and it is said of Albinus, that he was stern, reserved, morose, and rigid to cruelty. The mouth of a lion, may indicate a voracious appetite; and it is said of Albinus, that he would eat at a breakfast, 500 figs, 100 peaches, 10 melons, 20 bunches of grapes, 100 small birds, and 400 oysters<sup>21</sup>.

"And the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority." Albinus commanded the Roman legions in Britain, at the time of the death of Commodus, and so was in a situation to have contended with Severus for the empire immediately on the death of Pertinax; but Severus craftily declared him Cæsar; and therefore is said to have given him his power, and his throne, and great authority.

"And I saw one of his heads as it were slain to death; and his deadly wound was healed." A premature report of the death of Commodus having been spread in Britain, Albinus proposed to restore the republican government; by which Commodus being exasperated, he sent Junius Severus to take command in Britain; but that officer did not arrive before the death of Commodus was known in that country.

"And the whole earth followed this beast with admiration." It is said by the writer of the life of Albinus, that no prince was ever so much beloved by the senate as he; the soldiers whom he commanded were much attached to him; and he was universally esteemed by the people of Rome.

rus is therefore represented as cast out of Heaven, while two of his opponents ascend from hell, and one (Albinus) from the sea, because he happened to be in Britain.

<sup>20</sup> The serpent, to whom the ancients ascribed great subtlety, was a fit emblem of the crafty, false, and cruel Severus.

<sup>21</sup> The truth of this assertion, made by Capitolinus, has been questioned; but I consider what is said by the writer of the Apocalypse, as corroborating it. The roman emperor Maximin, is said to have eaten 60lbs. of flesh daily. We read of a Mr. Marriot, the Cormorant, or great eater of Gray's Inn, about the year 1650, who eat 12lbs. of meat daily.

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"And power was given him to continue forty-two months." Albinus continued in power, as Cæsar under Severus, from June 193, until December, 196<sup>22</sup>, when he was declared a public enemy.

"No man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Severus, in June 193, caused several medals to be struck with the name of Albinus, statues to be erected to him, and money to be coined with his image impressed thereon. No man could buy or sell without money.

"His number is 666." The name of Decimus Clodius Albinus, written in Greek contains this number<sup>23</sup>.

CHAP. 14. "And I looked, and lo, a LAMB stood on Mount Zion, and with him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name, and his father's name, written on their foreheads." This *lamb* is Caracalla, whom this writer represents as the Messiah. The one hundred and forty-four thousand, are the soldiers of Severus<sup>24</sup>.

"And the wine-press was trodden without the city; and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of sixteen hundred furlongs." After the death of Pertinax, Severus marched with his army to Rome, artfully drew out the traitorous prætorian guards, who had murdered that excellent prince, and sold the empire; he surrounded them with his troops; reproached them for their perfidy and cowardice; dismissed them from the service with ignominy; despoiled them of their horses, military dress, and ornaments; and banished them on pain of death, one hundred miles from Rome; that is, from a space sixteen hundred furlongs in diameter. The wine press is the prætorian

<sup>22</sup> Caracalla was declared Cæsar by the army of Severus, at Viminacium on the Danube, on the return of Severus, from the east in 196, and Albinus was declared a public enemy at the same time. It was probably in December, as Severus is said to have marched through snows and frosts, as he advanced to Gaul. It was at the games of the circus, a little before the Saturnalia, that is, about the middle of December, that the people of Rome manifested their great concern at the preparation for another civil war.

<sup>23</sup> Δ	ε	κ	ι	μ	ο	ν	}	666.
4,	5,	20,	10,	40,	70,	50,		
K	λ	ο	δ	ι	ο	ν		
20,	30,	70,	4,	10,	70,	50,		
A	λ	β	ι	ν	ο	ν	}	
1,	30,	2,	10,	50,	70,	50,		

Twenty-one letters in the name of Albinus, give the exact number. This is the proof required by the writer, that his enigma is solved. There can be no mistake. "The interpretation is sure."

<sup>24</sup> Historians say that Severus commanded one hundred and fifty thousand men at the battle of Lyons.



camp without the city, out of which came the men and the price of blood, "even to the horse bridles"<sup>25</sup>."

CHAP. 16. This chapter I suppose to relate to the events of the war between Severus and Niger. Armagedon, , may signify, the enemy of precious things; and may be Byzantium.

"And there was a great earthquake." This is the civil war between Severus and Niger. "And the great city was divided into parts." This may be Rome, or the empire, divided into parties for Severus, Albinus, and Niger. "And the cities of the Heathen fell." These are the Asiatic cities, severely punished by Severus for adhering to Niger. "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." This signifies the destruction of the principal men who adhered to Niger. Severus put to death those senators who served as generals and tribunes under Niger; other senators of his party, were banished to the islands and their estates confiscated.

"And there fell upon men great hail, like talent weights, out of Heaven." The army of Severus besieged Byzantium; the defenders of the city had provided machines, which hurled large beams and stones on the besiegers, when they came near to the walls, and others which threw showers of darts and smaller stones, when the enemy were at a greater distance.

CHAP. 17. "I saw a woman sit upon a crimson beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." This beast is different from the lion mouthed beast of the 13th chapter; *that* beast is like a leopard, (spotted;) *this* is a crimson beast; *that* has, on his heads, a name of blasphemy; *this* is full of names of blasphemy; *that* has ten crowns on his horns; *this* has no crowns. This beast is Niger; and the woman who sits upon him, is Byzantium. We have here a vision of Byzantium previous to the death of Niger.

"And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." The Christians of Byzantium had been persecuted during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. In speaking of the fall of that city, Cæcilius Capella, who is supposed to have been governor of Thrace, said, "Christians, you have reason to rejoice"<sup>26</sup>." And so they did<sup>27</sup>.

"The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." Constantinople, as well as Rome is built on seven hills. Byzantium only occupied a part of them. The ten horns, who are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but are

<sup>25</sup> He who wears a golden crown, and reaps the harvest of the earth, is Caracalla; he who reaps the grapes of vengeance, is Severus.

<sup>26</sup> Lardner.

<sup>27</sup> "Rejoice over her, O heaven! and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And again they said, Hallelujah! and her smoke rose up for ever and ever."

— about to take power as kings one hour with the beast, are probably senators exercising authority under Niger.

Chapter 18. "It is fallen! Babylon the great is fallen; and has become the habitation of demons, and the *prison*, φυλακη, of every unclean spirit, and the *cage*, φυλακη, of every unclean and odious bird." This is Byzantium, closely besieged by the army of Severus, after the fall of Niger, and therefore called a prison.

She saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow." Byzantium was then by far the greatest city of Thrace; exceeding populous and wealthy; fortified with strong walls, which were defended by many towers. The expression, "I am no widow," probably has reference to the recent death of the Emperor Niger.

"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire." The siege of Byzantium by the forces of Severus, is one of the most memorable in history, for the perseverance, valor, and skill of the besieged. At the end of three years, famine compelled them to open their gates; the magistrates and soldiers were put to the sword; the estates of the inhabitants were confiscated, and they themselves were sold for slaves; the city, with its stately theatres, baths, and public buildings, was laid in ashes; the walls were levelled with the ground; and thus the chief bulwark of the empire, against the northern Barbarians was destroyed.

"And every one *sailing to the place*<sup>28</sup>, both mariners and traffickers by sea, stood afar off, and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, "What city was like this great city?" This proves that the city mystically called Babylon, was a maritime city.

"And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall Babylon, that great city be dashed down, and shall be found no more." Byzantium was so completely destroyed, that it lay in ruins many years after the death of Severus. The city was indeed "dashed down with violence;" yet the writer proved a false prophet. The city was "found" again, and became, in the reign of Constantine, the capitol of the Roman empire.

The fall of the mystical Babylon, is, UNQUESTIONABLY, the destruction of Byzantium by the forces of Severus, in the year 195; and this event is the beacon which we must keep in view, while searching for the other events, enigmatically related in this book.

Chapter 19. "And I saw Heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat on him was called *A believer* Πιστος, and *Sincere* Αληθινος." This is Caracalla; and the time of this appearance is, the last of the year 196, or the beginning of 197, after he was declared Cæsar by the army on the Danube.

<sup>28</sup> I here follow Thompson, who says that he followed the Alexandrian, and other ancient manuscripts.



"And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself." This name of Caracalla is, *Christian*. Spartian says of him, that at seven years of age, when he heard that a boy, his play-fellow, had been severely beaten, because he was of Jewish religion, he would not, for some while after, look upon his own father, nor the father of the boy, nor those who had beaten him. Lardner says that, by the Jewish religion, very probably is here meant the Christian. As his preceptor had procured for him a Christian nurse, he was no doubt instructed in the Christian belief.

"And his name is called the *Logos* of God." The writer seems to have intended to represent Caracalla as the Messiah, the Lamb, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah<sup>29</sup>.

"And he hath on his cloak and on his thigh, a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Saint Jerom says that the Jewish ephod was made in the form of a caracalla, or monkish dress; then the caracalla was in the form of the Jewish ephod, and was a monkish dress; and from such a dress the son of Severus took the name of Caracalla<sup>30</sup>. He is therefore said to have the name of God inscribed on his cloak; because it was a Jewish ephod, or monk's dress. The same name was inscribed, it is said, "on his thigh;" but the *thigh* is sometimes written for another member<sup>31</sup>; and I suspect that Caracalla was circumcised<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> Rev. 5., 5. and chap. 1, 7. "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him; *even they which pierced him*; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him; This is Caracalla, who had the title of commander in the trifling war against the Jews in 198.

<sup>30</sup> But at what age did Caracalla assume this dress? In the figure of a medal of Caracalla, when a boy, in one of Crevier's plates, we read M. AVR. ANT. CARACALLA CAES. PONT. that is Marcus Aurelius Antonius Caracalla Cæsar Pontifex. This medal, if genuine, must have been struck after he was declared Cæsar, in 196, and before he was declared Augustus, in 198; and according to its testimony, he was then a priest, and called Caracalla.

<sup>31</sup> Gen. 46. 26.

<sup>32</sup> Julia Domna, the mother of Caracalla, was daughter of Bassianus, priest of the God *Elagabalus*, who was represented by a pyramidal stone, and was, as I apprehend, the same with the *Molek* of the Jews. We read that Bassianus, (grandson of Julia Maesa, sister of Julia Domna), who was priest of the same deity, and became emperor by the name of *Heliogabalus*, abstained from swine's flesh, and was circumcised in honour of his God. It is very probable that the first Bassianus was also circumcised. And if this rite had been performed on the first and third Bassianus, we may presume that, by the procurement of his mother, it had been performed on the second Bassianus, who is Caracalla. Alexander Severus, another grandson of Julia Maesa, had a statue of Abraham in his Chapel. His mother, Julia Mamea, is said to have been a Christian; and *Heliogabalus*, it is affirmed, was desirous of uniting the rites of Christianity to the worship of his God *Elagabalus*. I therefore presume, that this Syrian family, of "kings from the rising of the sun," (ch. 16. 12.) were degenerated Jews, and Judaizing Christians and that Caracalla had been circumcised. But perhaps his

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." This beast is Albinus; the kings of the earth are the governors and chiefs of Gaul and Spain, who aided Albinus.

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet." Some historians write that Albinus, being mortally wounded, was brought to Severus, and expired in his presence. The false prophet, supposed to be the same with the two horned beast, may be the governor of Lyonese Gaul, whose name I have not discovered.

"And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth." The battle of Lyons was fought on the 19th of February, 197; Caracalla was not nine years old until the 4th of April; yet he is said to have urged his father to put to death all the children of their enemies and Severus did so<sup>33</sup>.

"And all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Three hundred thousand men fought in the battle of Lyons<sup>34</sup>; the victory was long doubtful; but finally was complete; and consequently the slaughter immense. The bodies of the senators who fell fighting for Albinus, were sought for, subjected to indignities, and left unburied.

Such are the events for which the Christians of that age sung Hallelujah! And Caracalla, who attempted to murder his father; who murdered his brother in the arms of his mother; who put to death twenty thousand persons for being his brother's friends; who massacred the people of Alexandria during a festival; and whose cruelty no rank, sex, or age escaped—he is the LAMB of the Apocalypse!

The writer says, "These sayings are faithful and true,—the things which must shortly be done,—the time is at hand." It is therefore contrary to his own words to look for the events pretended to have been foretold, in modern times.

nurse, or preceptor, had marked him on his thigh with the name of Jesus. The Pagans marked themselves with what they called *stigmata*, to distinguish to what divinity they were consecrated. In the plates of the work *Le antique explicue*, we see figures of the *Athletes Hetrusques*, with names or inscriptions passing down the thigh and leg.

<sup>33</sup> When we compare the sanguinary and cruel contest for the imperial throne, between Severus, Didius, Niger, and Albinus, with the calm and rational contest for the presidential chair, between Jackson, Clay, Crawford, and Adams, truly we have cause to rejoice.

<sup>34</sup> Gibbon, deeming the armies too large, has reduced them one half; but the estimate made by the writer of the Apocalypse, of the army of Severus at 144 thousand, confirms the testimony of those historians, who represent each of the armies as consisting of 150 thousand men.



This work is, in part, made up of passages from the prophets<sup>35</sup>, the talmud, the theology of the Rabbins, the pastor of Hermas, and the more ancient Apocalypses<sup>36</sup>, applied by the writer to the history of his own time.

It remains to ascertain, who was the writer of this wonderful enigma, to solve which the wisdom of mankind has been challenged: and which has remained unsolved during a period of 1625 years, although some among the ablest men who ever lived<sup>37</sup>, have been among the many who have given it the most profound consideration. I am of opinion that, Ireneus, bishop of Lyons<sup>38</sup>, was the writer of the Apocalypse. His personal acquaintance with Niger, Albinus, Severus<sup>39</sup>, Julia Domna, and with

<sup>35</sup> Between 80 and 90 verses of the Apocalypse are taken from the prophets.

<sup>36</sup> There were Apocalypses of Peter, of Paul, of Adam, of Moses, of Elias, of Esdras, of St. Thomas, of St. Stephen, and one of St. John, different from that now extant.

<sup>37</sup> As Sir Isaac Newton, and Grotius.

<sup>38</sup> Ireneus wrote five books against the heretics of his time; in the first book, he wrote an account of the heresy Tatian. See Rev. 9. 1. He says of the Basilideans, that they make light of things offered to idols, and partake of them without scruple. See Rev. 2. 20. He wrote against Saturninus, Cerdon, the Valentinians, Marcionites, Cainites, Carpocratians, Marcosians, Sethians, and Ophites. He speaks of Mark, the chief of the Marcosians, as having come into Gaul, and made many converts there; and he speaks of the disciples of Mark, as having corrupted many women in the country about the Rhone.

In the epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, attributed to Ireneus, written some time after 177, and addressed to the churches of Asia, in referring to the execution of Pothinus, is this expression; "For he was indeed a genuine disciple of Christ, following the Lamb whithersoever he goes." In the Revelation we read, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes." This use of a similar peculiar expression, indicates that both these productions are, probably, from the same pen. In the same epistle, are found these expressions; "He that is unjust let him be unjust still;" and, "He that is holy let him be holy still." See Rev. 22. 11. Ireneus says that a heavy punishment awaits those who add to, or take away from the scriptures. See Rev. 22. 19. He also informs us that the Marcosians say, Jesus is Alpha and Omega.

<sup>39</sup> Severus governed Lyonesse Gaul in 187; Niger at the same time commanded the Roman troops in Gaul, who were acting against Maternus; and Albinus had governed another province of that country; therefore Severus, Niger, Albinus, and Maternus were well known to Ireneus.

the history of the infancy of Caracalla, who was probably born as well as nursed at Lyons, particularly qualified Ireneus to write the Apocalypse.

Ireneus was a Greek of Asia, and, in his youth, a disciple of Polycarp, bishop Smyrna, one of the seven churches; he went to Rome, and from thence to Lyons, where, on the death of Pothimus in 177, he was appointed bishop in his stead; he wrote several works, and in one of them spoke of the Apocalypse. In a passage preserved by Eusebius, Ireneus says, "These things being thus, and this *number* being in all the exact and ancient copies, and they who saw John attesting the same things, and reason teaching us that the *number of the name* of the beast, according to the computation of the Greeks, is *expressed by the letters contained in it*." And again he says, "We therefore will not run the hazard of affirming any thing too positively of the name of Antichrist; for if his name were to have been openly declared at this time, it would have been mentioned by him who saw the Revelation; for it was seen not long ago, but almost in our age, near the end of the reign of Domitian." In this passage Ireneus intimates that, if he thought proper, he could disclose the name which contains, by the Greek letters, the number 666.

It now appears that, although the Christian church has received the Revelation of St. John the divine as genuine, for more than sixteen centuries<sup>40</sup>, it is a *pious* forgery.

This discovery may not be pleasing to those who desire to restore the ignorance and mental debasement of the fourteenth century; but it should gratify the friends of truth, as well as the advocates for the unbounded freedom of the human mind. It clearly appears, that priests have never possessed a holy spirit, by which they could distinguish truth from falsehood. Consequently, as saints, popes, and councils, knew not what to believe themselves, they had no right to prescribe a creed to others. We have now discovered, that the pope is not the beast; that Rome is not the mystical Babylon; and that neither the Mahometans nor the Protestants, are the locusts of the Apocalypse; all of which doctrines have been taught by our spiritual instructors, of divers sects.

Let the clergy expunge from the canon of faith a forged book, written in the spirit of insatiable revenge<sup>41</sup>. Let not a difference

<sup>40</sup> This book was received as canonical, by Origen 230, Cyprian 248, Novatus 251, Commodian 270, Victorinus and Methodius 290, Arnobius and Lactantius 306, St. Athanasius 326, St. Epiphanius 368, St. Basil, Amphilocus, and St. Ephrem the Syrian 370, St. Gregory Nysson 371, St. Jerom 392, St. Augustine 395, Rufinus and the council of Carthage 397, Sulpicius Severus 401, and Pope Innocent I. in 402.

<sup>41</sup> Chap. 6. 10. chap. 18. 6.



of opinion in religion any longer excite discord, or cause division among us. Let us regard with marked disapprobation, those who, with exclusive zeal, inculcate anti-social principles: For belief and unbelief are equally involuntary; and as the one can deserve no censure, so the other can merit no applause.

*Consult the histories of Crevier, Gibbon, and Herodian, the Universal history, and Lardner's works.*

#### Supplemental Note.

Chap. i. 7. "Behold he cometh with multitudes." *των νεφελων*. *Nephelon* signifies clouds; but *nephos*, a cloud, is sometimes used to express a multitude. The writer alludes to the coming of Caracalla with a great army.

Chap. ii. 20. Marcellina, a woman of the Carpocratian sect, came to Rome in 160, and made many proselytes. She worshipped images of Jesus, Paul, Homer, and Pythagoras, and offered them incense. She may be "that woman Jezebel," if she ever dwelt at Thyatira.

Chap. vi. 8. "To kill with *ρομφαία*." I apprehend this writer has written *romphaia* for dart or poniard, ch. 1. 16, ch. 2. 12. 16, ch. 19. 15, 21; he has written *μαχαίρα* for sword, ch. 6. 4. The empire was not afflicted by war in the reign of Commodus; but the historian Dion, in enumerating the evils of that reign, has joined to the plague, assassinations, committed all over the empire with poisoned darts, or poniards *βέλονας*.

Chap. 8. "Cast into the sea." Montanus, by the unanimous voice of the church, was separated from the faithful.

Chap. 9. 11. "They have a king over them." Broughton says that the Encratites acknowledged a power in the Devil, independent of God.

Chap. 12. 1. "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." I expect the coins or medals of the empress Julia will explain this passage. The moon was represented on them.

Chap. 16. The 2d verse relates to the proscription and extermination of the friends of Didius.

In the revolution on the death of Commodus, ch. 6. 14, "every mountain and the islands were removed out of their places." This signifies the removal by Pertinax, of the officers of Commodus. But in the revolution, on the death of Niger, ch. 16, 20, "every Island fled away, and the mountains were not found." This signifies the banishment or death of the officers of Niger.

Chap. 20. 4. "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus." At Lyons in 177 those Christians who were Roman citizens, were beheaded; the others were exposed to wild beasts.

## REFLECTIONS ON HORSEBACK.

BY REGULATOR.

No 6.

THE idea generally annexed to the term *fixed star* would lead to a belief, that the star we see without motion, is held by some agent in one point, that a fixed star is rivetted or wedged or otherwise fixed in its situation. The opinion I have is, that a fixed star, or a sphere without motion, is nothing more than a sphere suspended independant of attraction or impulse. If the star has revolved, the power producing the revolution has ceased; or, if it should revolve again, it must be acted upon by some body of which it is now independent. The planets, of other solar systems might have had other actions than the present. They might have been comets, or may be comets again. From the strata of this globe, I am quite satisfied, that one of two things must have been the case to produce all its phenomena: either, it must have been subject to the irregular action of a comet, or the successive marine and terrene strata have been produced by the revolution of the globe in the manner described by Mr. Mackey in his Mythological Astronomy. The inversion of the Poles, or the Mahayuga of the Hindoos, which a revolution of this sphere which brings the North Pole into the relative situation of the South Pole, in 1,080,000 years, may account for the strata of the earth. The apparently fixed stars might have revolved upon its own axis; but this must ever be a matter of conjecture\*, and as the quiescent stars are at such a distance as not to be minutely observed by the largest instrument we now have. If we were situated with the greatest magnifying telescope, at the most distant quiescent star; still, we might see half the number more of undiscovered stars that we now see, and at another as distant, quiescent, fixed in the opposite side of the heavens, as many more might be discovered, and so on perhaps, if we were to move forward to infinity. One experiences a difficulty in pursuing this idea; because we have

\* The analogy of the motion of our sun on its axis and through a small orbit leaves us no room to doubt it.

R. C.



no knowledge of its parallel, we can only form an idea of an object by comparing it to something whose parts or whole we may know †.

† Therefore, *infinity* is a word without meaning. And we had better confine ourselves to an acquisition of a clear knowledge of that which we can see and compare. Mackey's System of Astronomy, though it may have defects, is certainly superior to any thing of the kind pre-existent and of European origin. It resolves a mass of difficulty in which Newton and others left us.

R. C.

## REFLECTIONS ON HORSEBACK.

### No. 7.

NECESSITY is decidedly the cause of the present planetary motion<sup>1</sup>. The motions are performed with the greatest regularity, and for the best of all reasons; because it is impossible to be otherwise, and when the present course of the celestial motions are changed, the change must be effected by the intervention of some other preponderating body. The irregular motion of a comet depends upon its laws<sup>2</sup>, and it is as necessarily irregular compared with our planets, as they are necessarily regular or uniform. If a pound weight could be taken from the sun and added to the earth, no doubt there would be a change or variation in one revolution and *vice versa*. Probably all the Planets belonging to the Solar System, maintain their present distance from the Sun and their rate of progression on account of their weight or specific gravity. If their specific gravity or magnitude ever changed, they would occupy a new position. There is nothing preposterous in supposing, that some Planets have been comets, and from having what is called an irregular but more properly an unknown motion, they have, by coming within the attraction of other bodies, been reduced to a regular revolution. If this is a probable conjecture, the celestial Napoleons, that overturn small spheres, may, at last, be inclined in their bounds and brought to perform uniform movements. I feel much disposed to think, that the quan-

<sup>1</sup> And what is the cause of necessity?

R. C.

<sup>2</sup> What are those laws?

R. C.

tity of matter in each planet regulates its distance from the Sun<sup>3</sup>: and the Sun swims in space beyond the attraction of other bodies. The centripetal and centrifugal motions described by authors are nothing more than the explanation of a fact and not the illustration of a principle<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> This theory would do, if there were no small planets between the Earth and Jupiter. Mars being smaller than the Earth spoils it.  
R. C.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Richard Phillips' clear mechanical theory is superior to all others. Putting God upon the shelf, we may be assured, that matter can only act mechanically, and that it must act mechanically, or upon the known principles of force in mechanism. Our ignorance of that more minute action, which we call *Chemistry*, by no means shakes that theory; though it leaves us in the dark upon too many points. But the duty of all and each is to persevere in making discoveries, that shall lessen that ignorance. Research is the proper pastime of mankind: and happily, it may be said, that the time is now arrived, in England, when research may be made without subjecting the maker, or discoverer of hidden things, to new or serious prosecutions. Eldon and Peel will be known to the future race of mankind as the last English Persecutors of philosophical researches. There may be others; but these blind bigots have a name, and that name must sustain the ignominy.

R. C.

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TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

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SIR,

London, May 9, 1825.

A FEW individuals who occasionally meet in Long Acre, and who feel interested in the spread of those enlightened and benevolent principles which you have so openly and so honestly avowed, and so fearlessly and ably defended, beg your acceptance of this *good* Sovereign, which will procure you some of the comforts of life in opposition to those *bad* sovereigns who rob us of its real comforts. We are of that class in society, which the state paupers, the drones, the wasps, (for they sting dreadfully, as well as rob the hive) call the lower orders; but we can assure them, we are not so low in mind or intellect, but that we can see through the whole arcana of kingcraft and priestcraft: and if they would but keep their paws off, would neither fear them nor their God; but, on the contrary, should like to try our reasoning powers with theirs, conscious that we possess strength of mind equal to themselves, although we have not physical strength sufficient to withstand



their knock down arguments. We wish you to receive this as a token of our approbation, both of your conduct and character, and of our detestation of that villainy: for we can call it by no softer name, which seeks to destroy you, and through you, every thing like knowledge and freedom of mind. That priests and despots, and all who live in luxury and idleness, by fraud and oppression, should seek to destroy what must eventually destroy themselves, is natural enough; but when we reflect on the distress, the misery, the vast, the terrible, the wanton waste of human life and human happiness, in every age and every country, when we think on what the world is, and what it might be, were it not for these hateful institutions, we are astonished at the ignorance and apathy of mankind, and consider it the duty of every enlightened and benevolent man to do all in his power to rouse all from this fatal lethargy, to shew them the villainy of all the systems that oppress them, to direct them in the paths of knowledge, and to explain to them, that when once they have the will, they always possess the power of destroying this horrible despotism over body and mind, and to render themselves comparatively happy.

We beg, Sir, to congratulate you, upon your exertions and your success in this great and good work, and although robbed, persecuted and prosecuted by the villains in power, you have secured to yourself the esteem of the good, the wise and the liberal of, we trust, this and every age, and every country, and your worth shall be duly appreciated for the noble stand you have made for the rights and liberties of Man. Wishing you every happiness, we are proud to subscribe ourselves your real Friends, &c.

Robert Stickland	2	6	Mr. Frame	2	6
Samuel Beckford	2	6	Mr. Ellis	2	6
Mr. Leak	3	6	An unbeliever in Gods and Devils	1	0
R. Adams, a friend to every honest cause	1	0	Sundry small subscriptions	4	6

#### TO MR. ROBERT STICKLAND AND FELLOW SUBSCRIBERS.

CITIZENS,                      Dorchester Gaol, May 17, 1825.  
I THANK you for this often repeated mark of your attachment to the principles I advocate. Each of your names is quite familiar to me, and I hope very soon to meet you upon more pleasant ground and to give you verbal assurance of my gratitude for support that has been coeval with my imprisonment. The length of

my confinement has wearied some few of my old friends, some fell off at the prospect; but I am happy to say, that they have been but few who have so fallen off; and I am sure, that the time is near at hand when all will rejoice with me who have persevered to the end. What we have been doing here is beginning to be felt in America, and we shall soon extend energy and improvement to those who are more republican in name than in reality. Here we are more republican in reality than in name; and I think they err, who go from England to America in search of liberty; at least, that such is the case at this moment. Better food the labouring man may get, if that be the sort of liberty sought; but he will not get more of liberty of speech or of writing; nor any thing equal to what exists at home.

I am, Citizens,

Your grateful friend,

RICHARD CARLILE.

#### MR. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

North Shields, February 14, 1825 years  
since the Christians date the nativity  
of their *God*.

SIR,

A FEW friends to free thinking and free writing met in this town, to celebrate the birth day of that *nobleman* of immortal memory, THOMAS PAINE, who may be justly stiled one of the Saviours of the human race; for he has been eminently instrumental in saving them from vain terrors, and a degrading faith in the deceptions of the holy jugglers.

The evening was spent usefully and rationally. There was no pandering to national prejudices, no hypocritical reservations, no toasting of murderous heroes, no immodest language and belching forth the praises of dignified idiots. The disciples of reason cannot thus brutify themselves.

Mr. William Campbell, in a clear and energetic manner demonstrated the necessity of free discussion to the happiness of man. Mr. James Waugh delighted the company with an original and several sentimental songs adapted to the occasion: and Mr. John Mills, added to the "feast of reason" by many appropriate recitations: and on such an occasion, be assured, Sir, that the wrongs, the sufferings, the fortitude, and the unconquerable courage of the illustrious martyr of Dorchester was not forgotten. The conscious guilt and impotent rage of your enemies are daily becoming more apparent. You have generously offered yourself



a sacrifice for the good of your fellow men ; and when the power of your enemies has passed away, when their creeds are universally scouted, and when their cruelty is quoted only as instance of ancient barbarity, your name will live embalmed in the memory of every human being.

## In behalf of the Subscribers,

I. P.

Joseph Wright, Materialist	1	0	J. D., Materialist	1	6
Adam Waugh, Materialist	0	6	A. O., one that is called after		
Matthew Robson, do.	2	0	the first said to be creat-		
Joseph Forster, do.	1	6	ed, who believes the whole		
William Riddle	1	0	to be a fable	0	6
An Enemy to Oppression	0	6	G. M., Materialist	0	6
William Hislop, Materialist	1	0	Mark Sutherland, Materialist	1	0
William Campbell, do.	1	0	G. S., Deist	1	0
James Boyd, do.	1	0	One who has received benefit		
Thomas Hislop, do.	1	0	from Quicksilver	1	0
Robert Marshall, do.	0	6	J. E., a Deist	1	0
John Mills	0	6	John Taylor	0	6
James Waugh, Materialist			R. D., Materialist	0	6
and Republican	3	0	I. I.	0	6
R. R., Deist	1	0	B. P., on Enemy to Priests	1	0
I. P., Materialist	3	0	A Friend	1	0
A Methodist and an Enemy			A Friend	1	0
to persecution	0	3			

The Subscribers request that this may be inserted in the Republican as soon as possible. And be assured, Sir, that within these few years, materialism has made considerable progress in this town and is still increasing.

### TO MR. JOSEPH WRIGHT AND OTHER SUBSCRIBERS OF NORTH SHIELDS.

CITIZENS,

Dorchester Gaol, May 17, 1825.

THOUGH the date of your communication is the 14th of February, the Shields post mark is for May 10. I mention this, lest any one impute negligence to me in the notice of your communication.

I return you thanks for this your first communication from North Shields, and rejoice to find, that I am not working in vain. All that has been desired in the cry for radical reform may very soon be carried, if the people will shake off the priests and come forward boldly to assert and practise the right of free discussion. What we want, as to the aggregate of the people, is more knowledge among them: and this can only be obtained on a large scale, by free discussion and the putting aside all priestly guides, of all men who would lead us into temptation whilst they pray against it and continue using error for their own profit. This is

the evil from which we have most need to pray to be delivered. Get rid of this evil, be sober and industrious, and improve your minds with all possible dispatch, and you need not pray for daily bread, you need not ask another kingdom, you need not ask a God to forgive either your debts or trespasses. Let the Priest but cease his trespasses upon the produce of your industry and we will soon cease to owe or to trespass upon one another. Let us have no God to keep, and we will soon learn to keep ourselves without his aid or that of his priests. Though these Gods eat nothing wear nothing, they are very expensive phantoms. It may be fairly culculated, that they absorb a fifth of all property produced by the labourer of mankind! A tenth! is the ordinary and direct demand; and contingencies certainly make up a second tenth, taking the average of all countries. The Priests are a sad pest, a sad burthen to us, and to confer any great benefit upon mankind, we must get rid of them. Nothing is more easy; we have only to say that we have no further need of them and they must retire. Various communications, that have lately reached me, assure me, that a burst of feeling will soon be seen and heard and felt on this subject, that the priests must soon reason with us or retire. Good government, that is, good laws, would be sure to follow the fall of the Priests. I am, Citizens, a zealous labourer in your vineyard,

RICHARD CARLILE.

#### NOTICE.

HAVING received a large additional mass of papers, printed and in manuscript, and wishing to digest the whole well before I begin to print, I postpone the subject of Freemasonry to No. 1, Vol, XII; for the further purpose also, of bringing the whole into one and the same volume. It will then certainly be proceeded with. I could go on well now, having sufficient information to begin; but I have thought it best to delay it a few weeks, for the foregoing reasons. In addition to Preston's History or Illustrations of Masonry, I wish to borrow Dr. Hammonde's Lectures, of which I have only the four first sections. Perhaps some sensible brother, indignant at the error and nonsense into which he has been drawn, can furnish me with these. It is rather a merit than otherwise to scout such an oath as Masonry imposes, as will be well explained, the oath being absolutely unlawful, and in the case of the Royal Family treasonable.

R. C.

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